

# ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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<b>Responsible Person</b>	Dean	
<b>Related Documents</b>	ACAP Moderation Policy; Academic Misconduct Policy; Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure	
<b>References and Legislation</b>	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards (TEQSA) Act 2011 (Cth); Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015; Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth); Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001; National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011; Migration Act 1958 (Cth); National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018; the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth); Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)	

## 1. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to set out principles and procedures in relation to all aspects of assessment in both Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses.

## 2. Scope:

Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all full-time and part-time ongoing, sessional and casual academic staff.

## 3. Definitions:

Term	Definition
<i>Academic staff / teaching staff</i>	Permanent and casual employees engaged in teaching and assessment of courses at the institution.
<i>Adverse circumstances/ unforeseeable adverse circumstances</i>	Are those as defined in this policy. See also ‘compassionate or compelling circumstances’ and ‘special circumstances’.
<i>Assessment</i>	The process of gathering evidence that enables judgements to be made concerning a student’s knowledge, skills and performance in relation to the outcomes and/or competencies specified in the appropriate levels of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
<i>Assessment in higher education courses</i>	The process of gathering a range of evidence about students’ learning and performance and forming judgments as to whether students have achieved the specified level of knowledge, skill and application in the learning outcomes as outlined in accredited units of study.
<i>Assessment in vocational education and training</i>	The process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, in accordance with the VET principles of assessment and the rules of evidence, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace as expressed in the relevant industry endorsed Training Package or in the learning outcomes of an accredited VET course.

Term	Definition
<i>College (the)</i>	The Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP).
<i>Compassionate or compelling circumstances</i>	<p>This is defined in the National Code 2018 as circumstances that have an impact on a student's wellbeing and/or on their ability to progress in their Courses or program. They must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ be beyond the control of the student; and</li> <li>▪ occur subsequent to the student accepting an offer to study; and</li> <li>▪ have an impact on the student's general well-being or their capacity and/or ability to progress through their course.</li> </ul> <p>(see also 'special circumstances' and 'adverse circumstances/ unforeseeable adverse circumstances')</p>
<i>Extension</i>	Additional time granted to a student for the submission of an assessment.
<i>International student/ Overseas student</i>	A student required to hold a student visa for study in Australia.
<i>Moderation</i>	is the review of assessment grading to ensure consistency in grading. Refer to the Moderation Policy for guidelines and strategies concerning the implementation of moderation.
<i>Reasonable adjustment</i>	The amendment of assessment procedures or materials to enable their application with students who have specific needs or disabilities.
<i>Special circumstances (see also 'compassionate or compelling circumstances' and 'adverse circumstances/ unforeseeable adverse circumstances')</i>	<p>Circumstances that have an impact on a student's wellbeing and/or on their ability to progress in their Courses or program. Special circumstances apply to the person if and only if the provider is satisfied that circumstances apply to the person that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ are beyond the person's control; and</li> <li>▪ do not make their full impact on the person until on or after the census date for the unit of study; and</li> <li>▪ make it impracticable for the person to complete the requirements for the unit during the period during which the person undertook, or was to undertake, the unit.</li> </ul> <p>The term Special Circumstances as used in this policy does not cover an inability to repay student loans due to special circumstances as set out in the Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003. For information about repaying or re-crediting a HELP debt refer to the College's Refund Policy and/or HELP Review and Remissions Policy and/or the government's Study Assist website.</p>
<i>Special consideration</i>	Consideration given to a student who has experienced unforeseeable adverse circumstances that have impacted negatively on the individual student's ability to demonstrate their learning achievements.
<i>Trimester</i>	The name for each of the three standard academic periods/terms in an academic calendar year.
<i>Unit</i>	A unit of study in a higher education course or a unit of study, module and/or unit of competency in a Vocational Education and Training course.

## 4. Policy

### 4.1 Assessment in Higher Education courses

Assessment in higher education courses is based on a standards approach. Student grades are assigned on the basis of a pre-determined standard specified for assessment tasks and a unit of study.

### 4.2 Assessment in Vocational Education and Training courses

Assessment in Vocational Education and Training courses is used to gather evidence to assess competence and graduate capabilities. These are assessed against the unit of competency requirements outlined in training package.

### 4.3 Principles of Assessment

Assessment is a central and integrated component of the Learning and Teaching process. Assessment is carried out for a range of purposes, including diagnostic, formative and summative. Assessment tasks are designed to assess relevant generic skills, such as academic literacy, numeracy and information skills, and graduate attributes as well as discipline-specific knowledge and skills. Assessment tasks draw upon a diversity of methods, forms and modes in order to address the needs, learning styles and abilities of all students.

Within this context, this policy outlines principles of assessment for teachers for both Higher Education and VET courses. The principles have been designed for use by teachers engaged in the processes of curriculum development and quality review, the development and review of assessment and in marking, moderation and feedback processes.

Assessment is:

- **Fair** – The process of assessment should not discriminate against or disadvantage any student or group of students. Students are not disadvantaged in assessment by the mode of delivery in which they are studying.
- **Reasonable** – Assessment workload is reasonable in the context of work volume and time expectations.
- **Authentic and Relevant** – Where possible, assessment includes real world and relevant application of knowledge and skills.
- **Valid and Reliable** – Assessment items must be valid and reliable. A valid assessment accurately reflects a student's knowledge, skills or understanding.
- **Aligned** – Assessment items must align with learning outcomes and learning activities within the unit of study. Assessment is appropriate for the level of the unit and aligns with the student's stage of development.
- **Transparent** – All assessment tasks should include a set of criteria or standards against which student work will be assessed. Where possible, descriptors of the various levels of achievement will be included.
- **Enabling** – Where relevant to the aim and timing of assessment tasks students receive feedback that is timely, constructive, specific and respectful feedback, which clearly indicates how they can improve.
- **Compliant** – Assessment practices meet the theory, knowledge and skills requirements associated with the relevant AQF level, all other regulatory frameworks, including VET training packages and professional body requirements.

### 4.4 Moderation and Validation of Assessment

It is the responsibility of all schools to ensure that internal and external moderation and validation processes are maintained in order to ensure consistency of assessment feedback, judgments and grading, especially where courses are delivered across campuses. Moderation and validation processes must be consistent with relevant policy documents.

## **5. Procedure**

### **5.1 The Methods of Assessment and Gathering Evidence**

Assessment tasks should draw upon a diversity of methods, forms and modes in order to address the needs and abilities of all students. Evidence of achievement of learning outcomes and required competencies may be gathered in a variety of forms and methods. These include but are not limited to: essays, reports, case studies, learning journals, practice sessions, observing and documenting performance, observing performance in simulations and role-plays and examinations.

### **5.2 Group, Peer and Self-Assessment**

#### **5.2.1 Group Assessments**

In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to set group-based assessment tasks. In such tasks, the criteria for assigning individual/group grades must be clearly documented. Under no circumstances should any group-based unit assessment, counting toward the aggregate mark for the unit, be placed entirely in the hands of the group members. Higher education work prepared by groups and presented as a single entity should be allocated weighting commensurate with the complexity of the task but not count for more than 30% of the final unit grade. In special circumstances (for example, problem-based learning units), a Chair of Discipline and/or a Unit Coordinator may apply to the Learning and Teaching Committee for approval to increase the weighting of the task.

In VET group work activities may comprise 100% of the total assessment of competence due to the nature of the module. Assessments within group work should be based on the performance of the individual learner. Each learner is to be assessed on all components of the task.

#### **5.3 Peer and Self-Assessment**

It is recognised there may be units where, for pedagogical reasons, peer and/or student self-assessments are sought as a valuable source of input into the learning process. However, these peer and self-assessments must always be obtained in context with assessment judgments made by the Unit Coordinator, tutor or teacher. Under no circumstances should any individually based unit assessment, counting toward the aggregate mark for the unit, be determined solely by students.

#### **5.4 Grading Standards**

Assessment is carried out at both the individual task level and at the level of the unit.

Assessment tasks within units are marked and graded according to specific marking criteria. For students enrolled in VET courses, the outcomes are recorded as Competent or Not Yet Competent. For Higher Education, the outcomes are recorded as Did Not Achieve Learning Outcomes, Pass, Credit, Distinction or High Distinction for graded assessments and as Ungraded Pass and Ungraded Fail for ungraded assessments.

Overall final assessment results for Higher Education units reflect the cumulative achievement of students in all assessment tasks. The outcomes are recorded as Did Not Achieve Learning Outcomes, Fail Incomplete, Fail No Submission, Pass, Credit, Distinction, High Distinction, Ungraded Pass and Ungraded Fail.

For students enrolled in VET courses, unit of competency outcomes are recorded as Competent or Not Yet Competent and learners need to achieve competency for each assessment task. Assessment tasks within a unit or competency are recorded as Satisfactory or Not Yet Satisfactory, or either Result Pending or Resubmission Required.

A number of administrative grades may be applied where results are unavailable due to special circumstances and/or the approval of extensions of time: Withdrawn Fail and Result Pending. *Attachment 1, Grade Table*, sets out explanations for each grade and the sectors to which the grades apply.

All awarded grades are subject to the normal academic appeals processes of the College.

### 5.5 Reasonable Adjustment Provisions in Assessment

Assessment procedures, materials and tools may be subject to reasonable adjustment where a student has a specific disability or special need in accordance with the relevant accessibility policies. In determining the reasonableness of adjustment to assessments, the requirements of the learning outcomes of the unit are taken into account.

### 5.6 Assessment Record Keeping

All credentials issued by the College and all assessment records are kept according to statutory requirements, including assessment results and appeal records.

### 5.7 Extensions of Time for the Submission of Assessment Tasks

All students are expected to submit their assessments by the due date. In rare circumstances a student may be granted an extension of time for the submission of an assessment.

The timely submission of assessment or the appropriate negotiation of an extension is the responsibility of the student. As students are notified of assessment details well in advance of due dates, extensions will not be granted without demonstrated serious cause.

Students and academic staff should refer to *Attachment 2, Assessment Extension Guidelines*, for guidelines and processes required for the approval of extensions.

### 5.8 Late Submissions of Assessment Tasks

The College believes in the principles of equity and fairness, which require that all students are provided the same opportunities for submission of assessments including the same time to prepare and the same due dates. Students who submit late are seen as gaining an unfair advantage through having extra time to complete their assessment tasks. Penalties for late submission are set out in *Attachment 3, Assessment Late Submission Guidelines*.

## 6. Responsibilities

### 6.1 Responsibilities of Institution

The **Academic Board of the College** delegates responsibility for assessment to the College's Chairs of Discipline, the Board of Examiners and the Learning and Teaching Committee.

The **Assessment Panels** are responsible for determining and approving academic results on behalf of the Academic Board.

**Chairs of Discipline** have oversight of the review, evaluation and adjustment of assessments and the procedures for rigour, reliability, flexibility and fairness of assessment and their Discipline's procedures for ensuring the accurate recording of assessment results and unit grades.

## 6.2 Responsibilities of Teaching Staff

Teaching staff should:

- ensure that assessment is aligned with the Principles of Assessment;
- inform students of the relationship of assessment tasks to unit learning outcomes and required competencies;
- inform students of the expectations of assessments, including formal criteria and standards against which students' performance will be evaluated;
- adhere to unit overviews, including the set dates for assessment submission;
- implement appropriate moderation procedures to ensure that assessment standards are consistently applied
- provide constructive and timely feedback on assessments submitted by students;
- report accurately and objectively on student progress and achievement.

## 6.3 Rights of the Students in Relation to Assessment

Students have the right to:

- be informed of institutional assessment policies and procedures;
- be informed of the criteria and methods of assessment for units, specific attendance and performance requirements and the timetable for all assessment tasks before the unit commences;
- be informed of the relationship of assessments to the learning outcomes and required competencies of units;
- receive fair, helpful and timely feedback on their academic work, including evaluation of their performance and progress in units;
- have assessment tasks returned as soon as possible after completion with constructive feedback.

## 6.4 Responsibilities of Students

Students should:

- be aware of institutional assessment policy and procedures
- be aware of services and policies for seeking assistance and course advice in relation to extensions, absences or withdrawals from units or courses, and special circumstances due to illness or other misadventure
- behave in a manner that does not result in academic disadvantage to any student or unfair advantage to one or more students;
- be aware of the policy and procedures for appeals against academic decisions.
- be ultimately responsible for their own learning and academic progress

## 7. Document Management Control

Date	Summary of Changes	Author
14/09/2007	Policy Established	Dean
11/02/2008	Policy revision following policy review	Dean
9/04/2013	Policy revision following policy review	Dean
3/08/2015	Policy revision following policy review. Significant changes to form omnibus assessment policy replacing former NPI (ACAP, NCPS) Assessment Policy, Assessment Extension Policy 1.1 and Late Assessment Submission Policy and HSA Assessment Policy.	Dean

Date	Summary of Changes	Author
25/01/2016	Minor template technical amendments, including insertion of "and Procedures" in document title.	Dean
1/04/2016	Minor administrative amendment.	Dean
9/01/2017	Addition of Attachment 4 Special Consideration in Assessment Policy and Procedure approved by Academic Board 28 Nov 2016; minor amendment to definition of 'results pending grade' approved by Dean Academic, NPI 6 Dec 2016; and administrative amendment to company details and position titles.	Dean
30/06/2017	Administrative update to business and academic titles and roles	Dean
20/03/2018	Revisions to Attachment 2: Assessment Extension Guidelines	Dean
10/07/2018	Revisions to Attachment 1: Grade Table	Dean
12/10/2018	Change of template	VET Compliance Manager
19/02/2019	Revisions to Attachment 1: Grade Table	Dean
16/04/2019	Administrative changes	Dean

Attachment 1 to Assessment Policy

## GRADE TABLE

The below tables list grades used to report student academic achievement. Grades are used at both the individual assessment task and overall unit final result level except where marked with an asterisk (\*) which are used only at the individual assessment task level or marked with a caret symbol (^) which are used only at the overall unit final result level or marked with a footnote.

### Final Grades

Grade Code	Grade	Summary Explanation (Appears on the Statement of Results)	Detailed Explanation	Applies to
HD	High Distinction	85% - 100% overall mark, and all components of the unit were completed.	Exceptionally clear understanding of subject matter; clearly and logically organised with excellent presentation. Addresses all of the assessment criteria to an excellent standard above expected. Extensive evidence of insight and originality where appropriate. Demonstrating excellent levels of understanding with graduate capabilities and learning outcomes.	HE
D	Distinction	75% - 84% overall mark, and all components of the unit were completed.	Strong grasp of subject matter; clearly and logically organised with good presentation. Addresses all the assessment criteria to a high standard majority of the time relating to the unit outcomes. Evidence of insight and originality where appropriate. Demonstrating high levels of understanding with graduate capabilities and learning outcomes.	HE
C	Credit	65% - 74% overall mark, and all components of the unit were completed.	Competent understanding of subject matter and appreciation of most of the main issues. Addresses most of the assessment criteria reasonably well. Competent organisation and presentation. Reasonable command and superior of understanding. Demonstrating moderate to at times high levels of understanding with graduate capabilities and learning outcomes.	HE
P	Pass	50% - 64% overall mark, and all components of the unit were completed.	Demonstrates appreciation of subject matter and issues. Addresses most of the assessment criteria adequately but may lack in depth and breadth. Often work of this grade demonstrates only basic comprehension or competency. Work of this grade may be poorly structured and presented. Demonstrating an understanding of graduate capabilities and learning outcomes..	HE
UP	Ungraded Pass	Professional skills assessed, where student has met specified performance criteria at an appropriate level within a specified time.	Professional skills assessed, where student has met specified performance criteria at an appropriate level within a specified time. Includes units where assessment is based only on professional placement.	HE
F	Did Not Achieve Learning Outcomes	49% or below overall mark, and all components of the unit were attempted.	Demonstrates limited appreciation of subject matter and issues. Does not addresses the assessment criteria adequately. Inadequate achievement of specified learning outcomes.	HE
UF	Ungraded Fail	Professional skills assessed, where student has not met specified performance criteria at an appropriate level within a specified time.	Professional skills assessed, where student has not met specified performance criteria at an appropriate level within a specified time. Includes units where assessment is based only on professional placement.	HE
FI <sup>^</sup>	Fail Incomplete <sup>^</sup>	49% or below overall mark, and one or more assessment components of the unit were not completed or submitted.	One or more compulsory requirements or assessment components of the unit were not completed or submitted. At least one unit requirement was attempted.	HE
WF <sup>^</sup>	Withdrawn Fail <sup>^</sup>	Withdrawn after census.	Withdrawn after census. Administrative grade to encourage students to withdraw rather than receive one of the other fail grades.	HE, VET
CO <sup>^</sup>	Competent <sup>^</sup>	Vocational competency assessed, where student has met specified performance criteria at an appropriate level within a specified time.	Vocational competency assessed, where student has met all specified performance criteria at an appropriate level within a specified time.	VET
C <sup>^</sup>				
NYC <sup>^</sup>	Not Yet Competent <sup>^</sup>	Vocational competency assessed, where student has not met specified performance criteria at an appropriate level within a specified time.	Vocational competency assessed, where student has not met specified performance criteria at an appropriate level within a specified time.	VET
AS <sup>^</sup>	Advanced Standing <sup>^</sup>	Credit has been granted through articulation or credit transfer, or for a higher education qualification - in recognition of prior learning.	Credit has been granted through articulation or credit transfer for studies prior completed as part of another VET or higher education studies, or for a higher education qualification - in recognition of prior learning.	HE, VET
RPL <sup>^</sup>	RPL Competent <sup>^</sup>	Credit has been granted through recognition of prior learning assessment from another provider(s).	Credit has been granted through recognition of prior learning assessment for learning attained in part or in full outside of the formal education and training system.	VET
CT <sup>^</sup>	Credit Transfer <sup>^</sup>	Credit has been granted through credit transfer for a prior completed unit.	Credit has been granted through credit transfer for a prior completed unit as part of another VET or higher education qualification.	VET
S*	Satisfactory*	Result applied to individual assessment task to indicate student met specified assessment performance criteria.	Result applied to individual assessment task to indicate student has met specified assessment performance criteria.	VET

Grade Code	Grade	Summary Explanation (Appears on the Statement of Results)	Detailed Explanation	Applies to
NYS*	Not Yet Satisfactory*	Result applied to individual assessment task to indicate student did not meet specified assessment performance criteria	Result applied to individual assessment task to indicate student did not meet specified assessment performance criteria	VET
RR*	Resubmission required*	Result applied to individual assessment task to indicate resubmission / retaking of the assessment task is required	Result applied to individual assessment task to indicate resubmission/ retaking of the assessment task is required	VET

### Temporary Grades

Grade Code	Grade	Summary Explanation (Appears on the Statement of Results)	Detailed Explanation	Applies to
RP	Result Pending	A temporary administrative grade which indicates that the result for an assessment or unit has not been finalised.	A temporary administrative grade which indicates that the result for an assessment or unit has not been finalised. Used only to provide an interim result for units normally due to extension of time for submission or delay of marking.	HE, VET <sup>1</sup>
RPP <sup>^</sup>	Result Pending Placement <sup>^</sup>	A temporary administrative grade which indicates that the result for a unit that has a clinical placement component has not been finalised.	A temporary grade which indicates that the result for a unit with a clinical placement component is yet to be completed.	VET
RPeP Transition	Result Pending Placement - Transition	A temporary grade which indicates that the result will be transitioned to the related unit of competency in the updated training package.	A temporary grade which indicates that the result will be transitioned to the related unit of competency in the updated training package.	VET

### Class of Honours awarded for Bachelor (Honours) degrees

Grade Code	Grade	Summary Explanation (Appears on the Statement of Results)	Detailed Explanation	Applies to
H1	First class	Overall mark in the range 85% - 100%	85% - 100% overall mark; sustained high level of achievement	HE
H21	Second class, Division 1	Overall mark in the range 75% - 84%	75% - 84% overall mark; predominantly high level of achievement	HE
H22	Second class, Division 2	Overall mark in the range 65% - 74%	65% - 74% overall mark; sound achievement, with some high quality performance	HE
H3	Third class	Overall mark in the range 50% - 64%	50% - 64% overall mark; sound achievement	HE

All temporary grades (i.e. RP, RPP, and RPep Transition) should be finalised prior to the census date of the next trimester following the initial application of the temporary grade. In certain circumstances, the Dean may approve for temporary grades to continue past the relevant census date. Any temporary grades approved to result pending past census will be finalised by the end of the next trimester. Any outstanding temporary grades that have not been finalised by the end of the next trimester will be converted to, and recorded as, a FI Fail Incomplete.

<sup>1</sup> Grade is used at the individual assessment task and overall unit / final result level at ACAP

## ASSESSMENT EXTENSION GUIDELINES

### Purpose:

All students are expected to submit their assessments by the due date. In rare circumstances a student may be granted an extension of time for the submission of an assessment.

The timely submission of assessment or the appropriate negotiation of an extension is the responsibility of the student. As students are notified of assessment details well in advance of due dates, extensions will not be granted without demonstrated serious cause.

### Scope:

This policy applies to all current students of the College.

### Guidelines

Extensions will only be granted in extenuating circumstances and will only be considered on medical, compassionate or other serious grounds. The request must be accompanied by supporting documentation. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all relevant supporting documentation is forwarded with the extension application. Submitting a request for an extension does not automatically mean that the extension will be granted.

### Types of Extensions Available and How to Apply

Extension requests are made directly to the Academic Administration Team via the online [Assessment Extension Request Form](#). The unit teacher will be informed via email if the extension is granted. No requests for extension should go to the teacher directly.

Extensions will normally only be granted if the request is made 48 hours prior to the assessment due date.

The College must be satisfied that unforeseen special circumstances apply and will not give extensions on other grounds, such as, poor time management or over commitment in terms of workload.

Students can apply for:

- Seven calendar days extension from the original due date
- An additional seven calendar days extension from the re-negotiated due date, if special circumstances apply

### Limitations of Extensions

The maximum extension granted is 14 calendar days.

No extensions can be granted beyond the end of a trimester; this may mean that the maximum extension may not be available to all students in all assessments tasks.

Extension requests can normally be made up to 48 hours before the assessment due date.

No extensions are available for resubmitted assessment tasks for which a grade of RR (Resubmission Required)\* has been awarded. \* Applicable to ACAP VET only.

### Notifications of Extensions

Students, and their teacher, will normally be notified of the outcome of their completed application within two business days by email.

### Unsuccessful Extension Applications

If the application for an extension is unsuccessful the Assessment Late Submission Guidelines in *Attachment 3* allows a student to submit their assessment for marking up to 10 calendar days after the original due date; however, an academic penalty of 5% per day will apply.

A student may appeal a decision to refuse an extension by following the College's Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

## **ASSESSMENT LATE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

### **Introduction**

The College believes in the principles of equity and fairness, which require that all students are provided the same opportunities for submission of assessments including the same time to prepare and the same due dates. Students who submit late are seen as gaining an unfair advantage through having extra time to complete their assessment tasks. The purpose of these guidelines is to set out the academic penalties that apply for late submission of assessments.

### **Procedures**

All assessments should be submitted by the due date. Should a student require an extension they must apply in accordance with the Assessment Extension Guidelines (refer to *Attachment 2*) to the Academic Administration Team via the online [Assessment Extension Request Form](#).

For Higher Education late assessments without an agreed extension, an academic penalty of five percentage points applies to the mark a student receives for every calendar date the assessment is submitted late. [For example, a student receives 67% but is three days late, the final mark is 67% – 15% = 52%]

No assessment will be accepted after 10 calendar days from the due date unless an extension has been granted.

Where a penalty has been imposed a student may appeal through the Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

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Attachment 4 to ACAP Assessment Policy

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IN ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to promote equity, consistency and efficiency in the College's handling of applications for special consideration in connection with assessment due to unforeseeable adverse circumstances that have impacted negatively on individual students' ability to demonstrate their learning achievements.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to any assessed component that contributes to a student's successful completion of their enrolled course with the College.

### **Policy**

Special consideration is an equity measure to ensure that the assessment of students takes account of unforeseeable adverse circumstances that impact negatively on individual students' ability to demonstrate their learning achievements. Special Consideration in Assessment is available on the understanding that it will be used sparingly and **only where genuine need is proven**.

Students are expected to complete all assessments, examinations and other requirements of a unit to an acceptable standard and within set deadlines. The College however recognises that a student's ability to complete these assessments, examinations and other requirements may be affected by unforeseeable adverse circumstances beyond the student's control.

As a general guide, unforeseeable adverse circumstances in connection with assessment:

- a) are beyond the student's control (i.e. unforeseen, unavoidable or prior guarded against);
- b) have emerged or occurred after the Census date of the enrolled unit(s) of the applicable assessment(s);
- c) are sufficiently serious or of a nature or duration to have unforeseeably caused substantial disruption to the student's capacity to:
  - i. study effectively or undertake or fulfil assessment requirements and have adversely impacted the student's ability to demonstrate their learning achievements, and/or
  - ii. progress through their course; and/or
- d) are inclusive of other compassionate or compelling circumstances or special circumstances as defined in this policy.

Unforeseeable adverse circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a) medical circumstances such as serious illness and/or a severe psychological condition
- b) loss or bereavement such as the death of a close family member
- c) distress caused by family or relationship breakdown and severe disruption to domestic arrangements
- d) hardship such as that brought about by a sudden loss of employment
- e) trauma such as being victim of crime
- f) extraordinary commitments such as where a student,
  - iii. is a member of the armed forces involved in active duty
  - iv. is required for active service, for example in the Army Reserve, Rural Bushfire Service or State Emergency Service

- v. is selected in a state, national or international level team for sports or other representative events and involved in related intensive preparation or performance
- vi. is required to actively serve on a jury or subpoenaed as a defendant or plaintiff in a court, tribunal or other hearing for an extended period of time during their studies
- vii. involuntary change in employment conditions, such as an increase in your employment hours or responsibilities that were beyond your control
- viii. other extenuating circumstances or events that threaten the health or safety of the student or otherwise pose a major obstacle to the student's otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements.

**Unforeseeable adverse circumstances generally do not include:**

- a) circumstances which are considered to be within the control of a student, or which are to be expected in the normal course of the student's study, work, family or social life
- b) circumstances that do not meet the requirements of the consideration for which the student is applying as specified within the relevant policy or procedure
- c) failure of the student to understand or seek clarification of assessment due dates, examination timetable, a census dates, assessment requirements, practicum requirements, other specified college academic and/or administrative requirements including tuition fee requirements
- d) errors, mistakes, or negligence of an individual student including, but not limited to, failure to submit an assessment in the required timeframe or in the agreed alternate manner, failure to apply for an assessment extension, adjusted assessment arrangement or assessment appeal consistent with College policy and procedure
- e) the failure of an individual student to improve performance in circumstances which can be considered normal and in circumstances where they have received authorised extended, alternate or adjusted assessment arrangements
- f) an inability to pay tuition fees upfront or repay a HELP or other tuition fee loan debt
- g) minor illnesses (as determined by a registered medical practitioner) or homesickness
- h) an increase in hours or duties of paid or unpaid employment which is at the request of the individual student
- i) a student not adhering to their planned pattern of enrolment or agreed learning intervention strategy
- j) other circumstances which can be considered normal including, but not limited to, routine demands of paid work, normal demands of academic work, stress or anxiety normally associated with transition to tertiary education, examinations or other assessment, group work or classwork interaction difficulties, or financial pressures which could be considered to be expected.

## Procedures

### Eligibility to apply for Special Consideration in Assessment

Enrolled individual students, a group of students, or one or more students who are members of a group of students, may submit an Application for Special Consideration based on unforeseeable adverse circumstances which have impacted their, or one or more members of their group's, ability to demonstrate their achievement of the learning achievements. For group applications, a matching application is not required to be submitted by all students in the group.

### Application requirements

For an Application for Special Consideration to be considered valid for consideration it must:

- a) use the College form specified for this purpose;
- b) clearly set out the type of special consideration in assessment being sought (refer to 3.6) and the basis for the request;
- c) be supported by appropriate documentary evidence (refer to 3.3 below);
- d) be submitted to the applicable current Unit Coordinator by, or on behalf of, the student(s); and
- e) be submitted normally no later than 10 calendar days of the later of the due date or completion date of the assessment concerned or by the due date agreed with the applicable Unit Coordinator.

### Appropriate documentary evidence

All requests for Assessment Special Consideration must be accompanied by certified copies of independent supporting documentation, which may include (but is not limited to) any one of the following (or equivalent):

- f) Medical documentation or a psychological report. Documentation must include the practitioner's name and contact details on official letterhead, the date of consultation; the student's details; and the health professional's clinical opinion as to the approximate dates (specific where possible) of functional impact of the reported condition with regard to the effect on the student's ability to study
- g) Death certificates and evidence of relationship. This may include a letter from a highly regarded, independent member of the community that supports the relationship claims
- h) A letter from the student's current employer verifying a change in employment conditions and impact on the student's study, or a statement indicating that the student cannot be released from work on a required date
- i) A verifiable notification or correspondence from a relevant government department providing official advice of significant political unrest, civil war or natural disaster, affecting the student's place of residence, along with evidence of student's residency. Other relevant documentation (e.g. medical documentation or a psychological report) advising potential functional impacts may also be required
- j) Police reports outlining involvement in a serious crime or accident
- k) Correspondence from the relevant Australian Government Department responsible for immigration regarding a delay in student visa processing
- l) A copy of the agreed academic intervention strategy plan, if applying for special consideration on the basis of a College instigated academic intervention.
- m) Reference to supporting documentary evidence prior or concurrently submitted to the College in connection with another application will normally not be considered to have met the evidence requirements unless this has been prior approved by the College in writing.

Inability to provide supporting documentation will result in requests for consideration being denied. All documentation must be provided at the time of initial request for Assessment Special Consideration.

### **Procedure for assessing Applications for Special Consideration in Assessment**

- a) An *Application for Special Consideration in Assessment* lodged in accordance with this policy and procedure will be assessed on its own merit consistent with the College's Principles of Procedural Fairness and Privacy Policy.
- b) Student's previous requests for special consideration, academic standing and study history may be considered when assessing an Application for Special Consideration in Assessment.
- c) An *Application for Special Consideration in Assessment* will initially be assessed by the Unit Coordinator (or designate) prior to determination by the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate). Only the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) is authorised to approve any outcome in connection with an Application for Special Consideration in Assessment.
- d) The Unit Coordinator (or designated delegate) having assessed the application will provide a relevant recommendation to the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) consistent with this policy and procedure.
- e) The Course Coordinator (or designated delegate), in determining the outcome of an Application for Special Consideration in Assessment, will apply the following criteria:
  - i. the nature of the evidenced unforeseeable adverse circumstances and degree of impact these circumstances had on the student's expected assessment performance; and
  - ii. the extent to which the circumstances leading to the request were beyond the applicant's control and the extent to which the applicant contributed to the circumstances; and
  - iii. whether the special consideration being sought would in any way unfairly advantage the applicant against other students enrolled in the unit/course.
- f) If the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) determines that the performance of a student has been affected by unforeseeable adverse circumstances they, at their discretion, give special consideration to the case in the form of an adjustment consistent with this policy procedure, provided the adjustment would not give an unfair advantage in comparison with other students.
- g) The Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) will make determinations in connection with valid Application for Special Consideration in Assessment normally within 20 working days of the end of the applicable trimester in which the application was lodged.
- h) The applicable Unit Coordinator (or designated delegate) will be responsible for communicating the outcome of a student's Application for Special Consideration in Assessment to the student, in writing, and ensuring associated records are kept consistent with this policy.
- i) A decision of the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) may be appealed in accordance with the College's Academic Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

### **Permitted forms of adjustment to assessment**

- a) Adjustment in relation to assessment for individual work:

If the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) has deemed that the applicant's unforeseeable adverse circumstances warrant special consideration, they will determine the nature of the adjustment to be made to the student's affected assessment(s), unit and/or course requirement(s), consistent with this policy.

- b) Adjustment in relation to assessment for group work:

If the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) considers that the applicant(s) unforeseeable adverse circumstances have had no impact on the functioning of the group's ability to demonstrate their learning achievements in connection with group work, special consideration will not be extended to the individual members of the group.

If the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) considers that the applicant(s) unforeseeable adverse circumstances have negatively affected the group's ability to demonstrate their learning achievements in connection with the group work, special consideration must be extended to the impacted individual members of the group.

- c) Permitted forms of adjustment may include one or more of the following actions:
- i. Repeat of an assessment and/or examination in a specified time period
  - ii. Assessment extension within a specified timeframe
  - iii. Submission of additional or alternate work for assessment in a specified manner and timeframe
  - iv. Undertake an alternative examination in a specified time period
  - v. Post-census date withdrawal from the unit without academic or financial penalty, and/or
  - vi. Adjustment to the assessment and unit mark and/or grade
- d) Limitations to adjustments to an assessment or unit mark and/or grade

If the Course Coordinator (or designated delegate) considers an adjustment to the student's assessment or unit mark is warranted and that the student's mark is within the required range of the next higher grade boundary as determined by the Coordinator, the student's mark in the affected assessment(s) or unit(s) (and only in such affected assessment(s) or unit(s)) will be raised to the lowest mark in the next higher grade boundary. If a student's marks are not within the required range, then normally no assessment or unit mark and/or grade adjustment will be made.

- e) A student who fails to undertake in the advised manner or successfully complete an assessment that has been adjusted under this policy is considered to have not met the assessment requirements and will be awarded a fail incomplete or fail grade, as applicable. No further adjustment to the assessment will be permitted unless authorised, upon written application from the Chair of Discipline on behalf of the student, by the Dean.